DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Geographic News Bulletin

This bulletin is issued weekly by the Department of the Interior. The information in it is obtained from the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY, Washington, D. C.

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ICE PINNACLES AND CREVASSES ON THE "MER DE GLACE," WORLD-FAMOUS GLACIER

In all ascents where glaciers have to be crossed these ice folds are a constant source of difficulty and danger. Always avoided where possible, it sometimes happens, that they have to be climbed, and it takes an experienced mountaineer to select one sufficiently stable to bear the weight of a party

HOW TO OBTAIN THE BULLETIN

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What Chicago Owes to Geography

CHICAGO is the subject of one of a series of bulletins on American cities. The following description is based on a communication to the National Geographic Society by William Joseph Showalter:

"Geography made Chicago. Its position at the foot of the Great Lakes resulted in its evolution as the farthest inland terminus of navigation of the inland seas.

"Made what it is by the processes of geography, Chicago soon returned the compliment by helping geography transform other regions. Its slaughtering and packing industry has changed the center of gravity of the meat-producing world. Its agricultural-implement industry has revised the economic status of more than half of the inhabitants of the earth. Its sleeping-car industry has entirely revised the geography of travel, bringing hundreds of places separated by mountain and plain close to each other.

Leads World in Many Respects

"It is interesting to pause for a bird's-eye inventory of what the city is today. Fourth in population, it ranks first among the world's great urban centers in many ways. No other place butchers as much meat, makes as much machinery, builds as many cars, sells as much grain, or handles as much lumber.

"The Michigan Avenue improvement is a major feature of the now-famous 'Chicago Plan.' The beautiful highway, with its connecting arteries, unites the North Shore with the South Side. For years this thoroughfare has been the pride of Chicago and the admiration of all who visit the city. As a part of the Lake Shore drive that links the woods of southern Wisconsin with the plains of northern Indiana, it is a magnificent street.

"To secure the full benefits of her situation, the city is undertaking to connect her three great lakeside parks. Already Lincoln Park has edged a narrow way southward along the beach until there is a wonderful curving stretch of green reaching to Grand Avenue and making a four-mile parkway unbroken and unmarred.

Heavy Expenditure for Public Parks

"The city annually spends five million dollars for park purposes; more per capita, perhaps, than any other city of the first order in existence. There is not a 'keep off the grass' sign in the entire park system; and all recreational facilities are free except the boats in the lagoons.

"At the two golf courses in Jackson Park a third of a million balls were teed off in 1916. Twice as many people play on the long course in Jackson Park as play on the long course at the historic links at St. Andrew. No charge is made for playing, and there are locker accommodations for three thousand,

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LOOKING STRAIGHT ACROSS THE ELIZABETH BRIDGE FROM MT. GELBOT, ON THE BUDA SIDE: THE DANUBE DIVIDES THE TOWN INTO TWO PARTS—BUDA AND PEST

Buda is the old section and Pest the modern

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Mont Blanc: Apex of Europe

MONT BLANC undoubtedly remains "the apex of Europe" in spite of the loss of a part of its top in a gigantic snow and land slide as reported in press dispatches early last winter. This great mountain led its nearest European competitor for altitude—Monte Rosa—by 564 feet. Though actual measurements of the loss in height by Mont Blanc have not been reported, estimates are that it has lost only "some scores of feet," a loss which still permits it proudly to rear its head far above all other pinnacles of the earth's crust west of the Caucasus.

Mont Blanc, the "White Mountain," is the westernmost of the great peaks that form the Pennine Alps, which include in their length of about 50 miles such well-known features as Monte Rosa, the Matterhorn, the Great St. Bernard Pass, and Mont Blanc itself. Mont Blanc lies on the border between Italy and France. About ten miles to the northeast, also on the crest of the Pennines, is the common corner of France, Italy and Switzerland. The towering White Mountain is easily visible in fair weather from Geneva, seat of the League of Nations, sixty miles to the west.

A Mountain of Variable Height

Mont Blanc has been accepted as extending 15,782 feet above sea level—just 58 feet short of three miles. As a matter of fact, its height has varied from time to time. The highest visible stone in the mountain was 171 feet below the top, the crest itself being made up of an unknown thickness of ice and consolidated snow. This cap becomes slightly lower in summer due to melting, but is renewed in winter.

Partly hidden among lesser peaks and foothills, Mont Blanc was practically unknown to western Europe until 1744. At first local mountain climbers and tourists visited only the lower ends of the glaciers—among them the famous Mer de Glace—near the French village of Chamonix. For more than a quarter of a century a standing reward for anyone who would discover a route to the top was uncollected. Finally, on August 9, 1786, the crest was reached by a peasant guide, Jacques Balmat. He became more than locally famous and received the quixotic gift of a patent of nobility from the King of Sardinia.

The trips to the top of Mont Blanc were infrequent until relatively recently. In late years ascents have been made almost daily in summer, and a few intrepid mountain climbers have reached the crest in winter. In the early nineties of the nineteenth century Dr. Pierre Janssen, noted French astronomer, who was then nearly 70 years old, had himself dragged to the top on a sledge and there made astronomical observations. He caused an observatory to be built at the crest. Automatic recording instruments have since been kept in the structure.

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while some sixty an hour can be started in play. Frequently players have remained up all night in order to get a chance to tee off next day.

"There is a 'swimming hole' within walking distance of every boy in Chicago; and even with the fine municipal bathing beaches of the lake front not far away, these mid-city park lagoons are always in use, providing joy for the hearts of the kiddies who visit them.

Supreme in Harvester and Twine Industries

"Chicago's hold on the slaughtering and packing of meat is only less striking than its supremacy in the harvester and twine industries. One-fourth of all the meat animals that leave the farms and ranches of the United States are bound for the butcher's blocks of the lakeside metropolis.

"Imagine a hotel with 260,000 beds, 2,960 office desks, and a total registration of 26,000,000 guests a year. And imagine it having 8,000 negro porters carrying a stock of linen valued at $2,000,000 and using some $60,000 worth of soap annually. Such is the Pullman Company with headquarters in Chicago, as typified by the cars in the service.

"Selling goods to six million customers a year, handling a hundred thousand orders a day in ordinary times, and in rush times nearly twice as many, nothing but the most phenomenal system would stand the strain that the mail-order business of the world's greatest mail-order house involves. The story of how the vast flood of orders flows in and the deluge of merchandise flows out is an inspiring tale of Chicago business.

Handling 27,000 Pieces of Mail Per Hour

"The main plant covers fifty acres and has more than ninety acres of floor space. From the mechanical letter-opener than can dispose of 27,000 pieces of mail an hour to the shipping room, where the merchandise finally starts on its way toward the customer, nothing but organization raised to the *n*th power could cope with the vast volume of business that sweeps through the great institution.

"There may be one or two other department stores in the world outside of Chicago that have outgrown a full city block, but certainly no other such store has outgrown as large a block nor occupied more floor area than Chicago's leading establishment. The square bounded by Wabash, Washington, State, and Randolph streets is a big one—how big may be gathered from the statement that the basement sales-room of this institution covers four acres of ground, while the main aisle on the main floor of the establishment is nearly 400 feet long.

A Department Store Entirely for Men

"And yet the structure covering that block, 13 stories high, with four basements below, is unable to accommodate that vast retail business built up by the merchant prince of the Middle West; so across Washington Street there is a second building, big enough in itself for a princely business, housing a man's department store.

"Imagine a retail business that requires 46 acres of floor space, yet of such high class that more than 60 running miles of carpet are laid down to maintain the quiet elegance of the establishment. Fancy an army of shoppers so numerous that 77 passenger elevators are sadly overworked when high-water mark is reached, and a volume of purchases that requires 16 big freight lifts to handle it."

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Hunger Supplants Fetes Where Women Wore Twenty Petticoats

BUDAPEST now is the capital of a shrunken Hungary, a nation reduced to a fourth its former size, both in respect to its area and population. The famous city which first experienced anarchy and carnage during the era of Bela Kun and his communistic government, now feels the pangs of hunger, and can scarcely hope to regain its former importance, prosperity and gayety during the lifetime of its present inhabitants, if ever.

The Budapest of today offers a pathetic contrast to the carefree days of such fêtes as that of St. Stephen's before the war.

Men Wore Slit Skirts

That historic celebration, when men wore slit skirts and the women donned twenty petticoats is described in the following bulletin from the National Geographic Society, based on a communication from DeWitt Clinton Falls:

"For who Saint Stephen was and why he was thus honored we must go back some nine hundred and odd years in Hungarian history, from which we gather the following information: Vaik came to the throne of the Magyar Duchy in the year 997. He applied for and received the title of Apostolic King from Pope Sylvester II, and was crowned in Budapest in the year 1000, under the Christian name of Stephen. He did much for his countrymen to bring them into the established church, and founded throughout his kingdom churches, schools, and convents. His administration was a wise one, and so firmly did he deal with the attempted uprising of the 'Old Magyar Religion' party that when his death occurred, in 1036, he left his country entirely converted to Christianity. So much had he done for the advancement of the Christian faith among the wild hordes of eastern Europe, and added to the civilization of his subjects, that he was canonized and gladly proclaimed by the Hungarians as their patron saint.

Sacred Hand Kept in Royal Palace

"When the Saint passed away, in 1036, one of his hands was amputated and embalmed, and this sacred relic reposes in the court chapel of the Royal Palace in old Buda. Adorned with many handsome rings, it is kept in a crystal casket, set in a beautiful golden reliquary ornamented with many precious stones. In a special shrine behind the high altar, it remained for 364 days in every year, where it can only be seen by the royal household and those having special permission. On the three hundred and sixty-fifth day, the one set apart to do honor to Saint Stephen, it is taken from its resting place, and with great pomp and a most brilliant escort is carried in a procession to the old Matthias Church for a special memorial service. This is the only time that the reliquary is visible to the peasants and the people of the humbler classes, and they come from all over Hungary on that day to do homage to the sacred relic, as it is carried through the streets.

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THE SUMMIT OF MONT BLANC FROM THE DROMEDARY'S HUMPS

Though the descent in general is not so slow or laborious as the ascent, in some places it is more hazardous. The descent to the Vallot Refuge is particularly disagreeable, as the ridge seems far steeper as you look down it than it does in climbing up. The heat of the midday sun melts the surface crust on the slopes below, and one's feet sink into the porous substance at every step. The Vallot Refuge, snow-covered but distinct, can be seen just below the summit, to the left of the picture

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Moldavia

NOW that Rumania has doubled its area and population, thus becoming the largest of the Balkan States, it is attracting more interest and attention among nations of the world.

Moldavia, the north wing of the butterfly-shaped Rumania of pre-war days, was conspicuous during the struggle for being squeezed between the Austro-German armies on the north and other Central Powers' forces attacking on the south.

Moldavia had approximately one-fourth of the population and one-fourth of the area of the Rumania of 1914. The population was a little less than two and a quarter million and the area a little less than 15,000 square miles. To the west of it lay Transylvania and the Austrian crownland of Bukowina. To the east lay Bessarabia, with the river Pruth marking the boundary the entire distance. On the south is Wallachia, the other wing of the pre-war Rumanian kingdom.

East Is Plateau; West Mountainous

The Sereth River divides Moldavia into eastern and western sections, flowing the entire length of the principality along the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains. Eastern Moldavia, composed mainly of the high plateau lying between the Pruth and the Sereth, is approximately 275 miles long and has an average width of about fifty miles. Western Moldavia is entirely mountainous, the crest of the Carpathians forming the boundary between it and Austria-Hungary.

There are more railroads in Moldavia than are usually found in southeastern Europe. One line enters along with the Sereth from Bukowina, and parallels that river all the way to Focshani. Another line enters through the Carpathians from Transylvania by way of the Gyimes Pass, and forms a junction with the Sereth River line some thirty miles above Focshani. A third line follows in a general way the River Pruth from the extreme northern end of Moldavia to its confluence with the Danube. In addition to these there are several branch lines, running at right angles to the main lines.

Poland and Hungary Rivals for Favor

The history of the principality of Moldavia is of striking interest. It was founded about the middle of the fourteenth century by the Wallach Voivode Bogdan. It soon grew to be a large state, embracing the present Moldavia, Bukowina, and Bessarabia. Poland and Hungary were both rivals for favor at the Moldavian court, with neither able permanently to assert its overlordship. Stephen the Great ruled Moldavia from 1457 to 1504, and defied the Turks, winning a signal victory over them at Rakova in 1475. Gradually growing stronger, however, the Moslems succeeded again, under Stephen the Great's successor, in establishing their mastery.

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"Fancy our famous traffic squad shutting off Thirty-third Street, that the Waldorf-Astoria might accommodate its extra patrons at overflow tables placed outside on the asphalt! But in Budapest this was a people's festival; so busses, cabs, and wagons willingly took another street, that the city's guests might be accommodated and made comfortable and happy.

Peasants There in All Their Glory

"The first thing that attracted our attention, as we drove by the walking crowds, was the change of costume of the peasants from the day before. Then all were in their working clothes, but today they were arrayed in all their glory. The men had retained their flat hats, but had generally adorned them with flying ribbons of the national colors—red, white and green. The white divided-skirt-like trousers were now ornamented on the bottoms of the legs with fringe, or coarse lace, and the dark working coats had been laid aside. In their place were gala ones, always colored—soft browns, reds and greens—and elaborately braided with different colored cords.

"The women retained the colored head-handkerchief, but they were newer and brighter than those worn on Saturday. Their waists were generally of white or light cotton material, sometimes gaily ornamented with coarse colored embroidery. It was the skirts that were the unique things about the costumes. Of the brightest colors, they were accordion-plaited, and stood out in the most remarkable manner. How they accomplished this was a mystery to the ladies of our party, until our trusty guide and interpreter had been interviewed. From him it was learned that no Hungarian peasant woman considers herself properly dressed for a gala occasion unless she has on at least twenty petticoats!"

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Conquering Bubonic Plague in the Philippines

DISCOVERY last summer of a number of isolated cases of the bubonic plague in the United States lends interest to the following communication to the National Geographic Society describing how the disease was conquered by American medical authorities in the Philippines.

"The United States drove the bubonic plague out of the Philippines as completely as it swept the yellow fever out of Cuba.

"Bubonic plague was discovered at Manila December 26, 1899, and slowly but steadily increased up to December, 1901.

"The deaths in 1900 numbered 199, and in 1901 reached a total of 432. The disease was at its worst each year during the hot, dry months of March, April, and May, nearly or quite disappearing during September, October, November, and December. While the number of cases in 1901 exceeded that in 1900 by 200, the number of deaths was about two and a half times as great, and the percentage of mortality among persons attacked increased from 73.4 in 1900 to 91.7 in 1901.

Everybody Hunted Rats

"On account of the important part which house rats are known to play in the distribution of bubonic plague, a systematic campaign was inaugurated against these rodents in Manila. Policemen, sanitary inspectors, and specially appointed rat-catchers were furnished with traps and poison, and both traps and poison were distributed to private individuals under proper restrictions. A bounty was paid for all rats turned over to the health authorities, and stations were established at convenient points throughout the city where they could be received. Each rat was tagged with the street and number of the building or lot from which it came, was dropped into a strong antiseptic solution, and eventually sent to the Biological Laboratory, where it was subjected to a bacteriological examination for plague.

"Buildings in which plague rats were taken were treated exactly as were those where the disease attacked the human occupants. The bacteriological examination of rats enabled the board of health to follow the pest into its most secret haunts and fight it there, and was the most important factor in the winning of the great success which was ultimately achieved.

"With very few exceptions, there was no recurrence of plague in buildings which had been disinfected and renovated. As center after center of infection was found and destroyed the percentage of diseased rats began to decrease, and in January, 1902, when, judging from the history of previous years, plague should have again begun to spread among human beings, there was not a single case. In February one case occurred. In March there were two cases, as against 63 in March of the preceding year, and before April the disease had completely disappeared."

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Although the Turks never settled the country, they proceeded to build fortresses, and thus managed to hold their ground.

Up to 1821 the country was governed by *hospodars* appointed by the Sultan from the families of Greek aristocrats. In that year native princes were once more made to head the government but in 1829, Russia, having gained a victory over Turkey, was accorded a protectorate over Moldavia under the Treaty of Adrianople. This treaty was terminated by the Crimean War and the Treaty of Paris. Thereafter, the powers agreed to set up the two principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, which in their turn decided, in 1859-61, that they would unite under one head and become one country.

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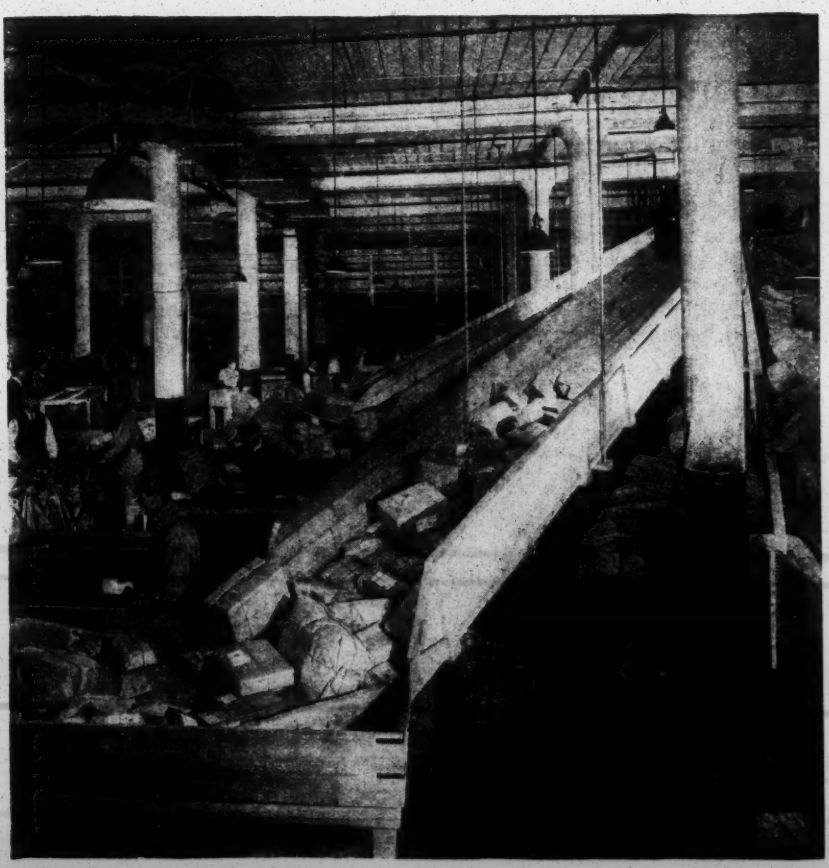
A VILLIAGE STREET IN RUMANIA

The day of "tap water" in every house in Rumanian cities is still a long time in the future, and such water-carriers as these are a common sight



MERCHANDISE "SHOOTING THE CHUTES" IN ONE OF CHICAGO'S BIG MAIL-ORDER ESTABLISHMENTS